AUTUMN VOICES.

By F. W. Bourdillon.

When I was in the wood to-day
The golden leaves were falling round me.
And I thought I heard soft voices say
Words that with sad enchantment bound me.

O dying year! O flying year!
O days of dimness, nights of sorrow!
O lessening light! O lengthening night!
O morn forlorn, and hopeless morrow!

No bodies visible had these
Whose voice I heard so sadly calling;
They were the spirits of the trees,
Lamenting for the bright leaves falling.

The light leaves rustled on the ground,
Wind-stirred; and when again I hearkened,
Hushed were those voices. Wide around
Night fell, and all the ways were darkened.

OUT OF STEP.

XI.

SOME MONTHS LATER.

Two women met at the door of a drygoods store on Summer-st., in Boston. They bowed and smiled at each other and said, "Good morning"; then they passed on. But the elder of the two, who was leaving the building, paused when she reached her carriage. She had opened the door of that vehicle, but she shut it again. She hesitated still further. Then she glanced up at the coachman and said:

"You may wait a few moments longer."

She returned to the shop and walked slowly down the aisle, looking about her. She was smiling very slightly to herself, as if what she was about to do was but the following out of a whim.

Presently she saw the figure she was in search of, and she hastened toward it.

"I have come back that I might ask a favor of you, Mrs. Moore," she said.

"Oh," was the reply, with a quick smile, "I shall so like to grant you a favor."

"But wait until you have heard what it is. Come and sit here a minute with me."

The last speaker turned toward a couch near the entrance to the elevator, and the two women sat down upon it.

"You know I've only met you twice," she continued, "but somehow I can't seem to forget you. Perhaps you've noticed that it is not always the people you've met a great many times that you think of most?"

As this remark was made with a questioning inflection, the other answered with some emphasis that she had sometimes thought that the oftener you met people the less you thought about them.

The other woman laughed as she said, "I didn't mean anything quite so bad as that; still——"

She bent forward slightly and put her gloved hand in the lightest manner upon the gloved hand of her companion.

"Has any one told you that I paint a little, Mrs. Moore?"

Salome's reply was somewhat eager.

"I knew that when I first heard your name," she said quickly. "And I have seen some of your pictures. They go right to my heart. Oh, Mrs. Bradford, you love the country as I do!—the country with the hot sunshine on it. I wish you would go to Florida and paint just a stretch of beach and the water as they look at noon when there is not a cloud in the sky. You would know how to paint a scene like that. There would not only be color, there would be heat and light, there would be the South in it."

Having spoken thus with more enthusiasm than is customary in what is called "society," Salome paused and added more moderately that her husband always insisted that it was a great mistake to call her a Yankee girl.

"I think he secretly believes that I am really a creature born in the tropics, and that for some reason I have chosen to make believe that I am a New-England woman. But, Mrs. Bradford, I do wish you would go to Florida and paint such a picture; and I would buy it; and then I should always have a bit of the South with me."

Here Salome felt that she ought to be confused because she had spoken so freely to Mrs. Bradford, whom she admired greatly and whom she knew so very slightly.

But there was something in her companion's smile and in her eyes that prevented any embarrassment, that even seemed to encourage Salome.

"It's another kind of a picture that I want to paint now," responded Mrs. Bradford, "and I am almost afraid I'm taking a liberty in asking for the opportunity."

"Oh, no," said Salome, not in the least suspecting, and very curious.

"Well, then, I want to paint your portrait. I wanted to paint it the very instant I looked at you. Only I can't do it as I ought. I'm sure I can't. Mrs. Moore, do let me try."

It was Mrs. Bradford who now spoke with more earnestness than was usual in what is called "society." But she was subject to lapses into too much earnestness whenever she touched upon the subject of her art.

Salome gazed at her companion in astonishment.

"To paint my portrait?" she asked, with a dwelling on the possessive pronoun.

"Yes, even yours. Is that so surprising? I should be willing to assert that Mr. Moore would not think it surprising. And when it is done you may make him a present of it—that is, if I succeed, partially. It would be out of the question to expect to succeed wholly with a face like yours. I wish you would go home with me now. My carriage is here. Please come; and don't say I'm presuming. I am in the mood to begin a sketch of you. And a woman must take advantage of moods, you know. I know just how I shall take you. It shall be the front face, with your eyes looking directly into mine. Please come."

Mrs. Bradford had risen. She held out her hand and Salome rose also. She was feeling very glad to be with this woman. She had not supposed that she should ever know Mrs. Bradford. She was not at all in Mrs. Bradford's "set," and had only happened to meet her at the house of a friend.

She could not be aware that Mrs. Bradford cared not the least in the world about "sets."

The two went to the carriage and were driven away. They hardly spoke during the drive, yet Salome was not conscious of any embarrassment from the silence, even though in that silence she was looked at a good deal. At last her companion withdrew her eyes as she said:

"You must pardon me. I know I am staring in a dreadful way, but I'm getting points for my picture. You may pretend that I am going to make you famous. Imagine an art reception and people crowding up to a certain canvas and asking each other, 'Who is she?' and answering, 'Why, don't you know? That's Mrs. Randolph Moore.'"

Salome laughed in that way that shows that a laugh is very ready to come.

"No; that is not what they will ask," she responded. "They will inquire who is the painter."

"And if they do they will decide that the artist was not worthy of her subject. But I'm going to try. I've only painted a few faces; yes, I'm going to try."

Salome was almost afraid that she would show too childish an interest.

"And will you have it labelled 'Portrait of a Lady?'" she asked.

Mrs. Bradford turned to Salome with that direct and yet gentle way she had. And she put a question in return:

"Do you want to know one reason why I am so eager to paint you?"

"Yes, please tell me."

The other did not smile. A look of deep seriousness was in her eyes, as she made answer:

"It is because you are happy. I have always wished to paint the face of a happy woman."

Salome's hands beneath her mantle clasped themselves together. She did not flush now any more than she had ever done; but the clearness of her face was illumined by that curious white light which comes to some faces, and which means so much more than color.

"Are happy women so very rare?" she asked.

"Yes," was the brief reply.

"Oh," exclaimed Salome, "I can't believe that."

"Can't you? That shows that my impression of you is correct. But don't you think we are talking very unconventionally?"

"Very. But that's the way I like to talk."

Salome was somewhat confused with the delight of being so suddenly and informally with this woman whom she had admired afar off on those two brief occasions when she had been with her. And she wondered that she felt so much at home.

"And it's the way I like to talk, too," said Mrs. Bradford. "That's the reason I'm not a good society woman."

"But you are—you are. You are my ideal society woman," exclaimed Salome.

"Your praise is very sweet," said Mrs. Bradford, letting her delighted eyes rest upon her companion, "but you are wrong, nevertheless. There are a hundred people here in Boston who would tell you so. I have never learned what to say; but I sometimes know what not to say."

"My husband thinks——" here Salome paused shyly. She had just recalled that an acquaintance had warned her that very morning that she really must stop informing people as to what her husband said or thought; that she must remember that the world at large was not at all interested to know what were Randolph Moore's opinions about anything. Randolph Moore's wife had acknowledged that this must be true; but in the bottom of her heart she could not help pitying those poor people who had no chance of knowing what Moore's conclusions were upon different topics.

"What is it that your husband thinks?" inquired Mrs. Bradford with such an appearance of interest that Salome forgot how she had been warned, and replied enthusiastically:

"He believes that it is of great deal more importance to know what not to say."

"In that case I need not be discouraged," was the response.

"Oh, Mrs. Bradford, don't laugh at me! I know it is silly to quote Mr. Moore so much."

"No; it's delightful."

"It's delightful to me," was the charmingly candid response, and Salome hardly knew why her companion laughed with such amusement.

After that there was another silence which was not broken until the carriage stopped before a house in that old part of the city where there is something besides "style"; where, in short, there is that true flavor of Boston which is at once so penetrating and so charming.

To Salome, who was staying at a new and what might almost be called a shining hotel in new Boston, this locality had a look of something very nearly like shabbiness. Still she could not tell why she liked it so well. She supposed, however, that it was because it was where Mrs. Bradford lived. Mrs. Bradford was certainly one of the real kind—the real Boston kind.

Salome had not yet discovered that this lady had only belonged to the real kind some half a dozen years; and that she was in truth even now no more than a country girl like Salome—no more, only, perhaps, a great deal different.

When the door was opened to them the elder woman, remarking that they would go directly to the studio, led the way to the rear of the house to what is technically called an "extension." Here was a small room with a northern aspect.

Having closed the door, Mrs. Bradford threw off her wrap and bonnet and began removing her gloves with some appearance of eagerness. She walked about as she did so.

"I'm so glad I met you," she said again. "I was thinking of trying to find out your address. It is possible that I should have been so bold as to call on you. That would have been proper, of course, but——"

"I am not in your set," said Salome as her hostess paused. "I don't know a single human being in this part of Boston. I should not have thought that I could ever enter a house like this, where—where——"

Here she also paused before the vastness of her subject. Her eyes shone. She was openly gazing about her at the pictures set against the walls; at the canvas on the easel; at the casts and busts and draperies. It was not an elegant studio like the scene of the pastime of a woman to whom to be here was merely a pastime. It was a real workshop, as Salome felt. She had not expected this. She had supposed she would be brought to a place that was fitted up beautifully, and where the artist amused herself. It is true that there was nothing here that swore at anything else, that there was a kind of unconscious harmony, but it was plainly merely a workshop, and not the lounging place of a woman who was but indulging a fad.

"Where," said Mrs. Bradford, taking up her guest's remark, "the very cobwebs are cobwebs of old Boston families, and are like the same thing on wine bottles brought up from the properest wine cellar."

She had thrown off her gloves on her wrap, and was taking the half finished picture from the easel that she might put a plain canvas there.

"Yes," said Salome, "I think that must be exactly what I was going to say, only my reverence, you know, prevented me."

"Naturally. Now please take off your hat. Run your fingers through your hair on your forehead; or permit me to do it. There. Ah, truly I'm in luck! I suppose in the days when gods and goddesses came down occasionally from Olympus, there were to be seen faces on this earth like yours. But not since then. No, not since then, surely."

The speaker stepped back a few paces gazing with earnestness at the face before her. She returned to her easel. The fresh canvas was in place. She took a clean palette on her thumb and a brush in her hand, and stepped back again, looking at her sitter at a different angle. There was a flush on Mrs. Bradford's cheeks and a steady glow in her eyes. Salome, contemplating her, could not understand it in the least. Of course a woman like that could do good work. But as for her, Randolph Moore's wife—well, she could not imagine anything unconnected with Randolph Moore that could excite so deep an interest in her heart. She told herself however, that people were different. But to her happy consciousness those words did not mean anything.

It was a delightful thing to sit in this room and have a woman like Mrs. Keats Bradford want to paint you, and she would keep the whole thing a secret from Randolph, and when the picture was done she would make him a gift of it. She could see his face now as he first looked at the portrait; she would tell him why it was that this artist had wished to paint it; it was because she was so happy; and then perhaps he would insist upon her telling him why she was happy.

These thoughts, which seemed even more feelings than thoughts, came in an agreeable confusion, hurrying after each other as Salome remained quietly where Mrs. Bradford had placed her. Then she thought that perhaps she would, after all, tell Randolph and ask her hostess if she might bring him there some day. Of course Mrs. Bradford, or any one, would like to meet Mr. Moore. That is, they would certainly like to meet him again after having seen him once.

Mrs. Bradford continued for a few minutes to walk around in front of her sitter and to look at her from different points. At last she said:

"I was right at first. One must be able to gaze straight in the eyes of this portrait. There is no other way. Oh, I shall not need to name it—not if I can put in this look. Do pardon me, Mrs. Moore, I'm not really daft, though I seem so. Now let me take a palette with some colors on it. It's not so much the color now as the drawing. Do you mind looking directly at me? Yes, like that. It is not necessary for me to ask you to put on a pleasant expression. Let us talk. Have you been in town long? Has any one asked you how you like Boston?"

"I've been in town about three months. Yes, every one has asked me how I like Boston."

"And what do you tell them?"

Mrs. Bradford was making rapid strokes, and then drawing back to look at them and at the woman in the chair in front of her.

"I tell them that if Boston were only in the South somewhere, Boston would be Paradise."

"Yes," responded Mrs. Bradford absently. She was making some touches and was absorbed in considering their effect. In a moment she appeared to come back to the realization of something or somebody being present with her.

"You seem to love the South, Mrs. Moore," she said.

"Oh, yes, I love it."

"Perhaps it was there that you first met Mr. Moore?"

The speaker looked at her companion and smiled encouragingly. This smile somehow went straight to Salome's heart.

"Yes; I did meet him there," she answered.

"I understand," was the response.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Bradford, but I don't think you do understand. If I had never seen Mr. Moore I should love the South just as well. But you make me talk about myself. I don't think one ought to talk about oneself, do you?"

"That depends."

Another silence, which was broken by an exclamation from the artist:

"If I can only get your eyes"

"They're hazel," explanatorily responded Salome.

"Oh, I don't mean the color—I mean the expression."

Silence again. Salome found that she was gazing directly at her companion, whether they talked together or not. She was becoming more and more interested. She smiled to herself as she thought of bringing her husband to see this picture. And Mrs. Bradford would know directly she saw him that it was perfectly reasonable for her, Salome, to be so happy.

In a few moments the artist sat down in a chair in front of the easel. She still kept her palette on her thumb, and occasionally she touched her brush to some of the pigments with an absorbed air. She seemed not to be really present; and yet she still appeared keenly interested in the work she had begun.

She noticed that it was when Mrs. Moore was quiet and her face in repose that it wore most strongly the expression she wished to depict. It was then that the eyes had that look of intense happiness that so strangely strikes the beholder with a kind of terror. Is it that we instantly say to ourselves that no human being has a right to be so happy as that? That to be thus happy is but to make oneself a mark for the gods to aim at?

It is true, however, that few of us poor mortals are capable of this kind of rapture when to live is an ecstacy; when to know that for us there are eyes whose glance gives us what we ask is to know everything that we long to know. This is the kind of happiness that to the observer suggests the deepest pathos—if he understands it. If he does not understand it he calls it abnormal and passes on to that lower grade of enjoyment which he does understand, and which is therefore strictly normal, and to be tolerated.

But Mrs. Bradford understood it. And perhaps that is why she should feel the tears so near her eyes when she met her companion's glance.

All at once she laid down her tools.

"I can't paint any more to-day," she said, with something like abruptness. "But I have made a beginning. If you will come to-morrow at ten in the morning—— Or is it too much to ask? Do I seem presumptuous?" She held out her hand.

Salome put her own hand in that extended to her.

"May I look at it?" with a recurrence of shyness. She had been thinking that she had been unwarrantably familiar with this lady, who lived in what she now called to herself the most cobwebby part of Boston.

"Yes, you may see it."

Salome walked with some hesitation in front of the easel.

"Oh!" she said softly. She turned a wondering gaze at her companion.

"Do I look like that?" she exclaimed. "But that is impossible. That is—why—Mrs. Bradford, that is going to be beautiful! And I am very plain. I have always been plain."

"Have you?" with smiling incredulity.

"Truly I have always thought so. And how have you done so much in this hour? It seems like a miracle."

"I thought I could catch the likeness the moment I saw you on Summer-st. this morning, and I have been at work"—she took her watch from her belt—"I have been at work almost two hours. You have inspired me, Mrs. Moore. Do you like it?"

She stood with her guest and contemplated the canvas, her own face glowing with that exhilaration which comes from working when the conditions are right.

"You know I haven't a good feature in my face," murmured Salome, looking at the picture.

"Haven't you?" Mrs. Bradford said, as before she had said, "Have you?"

"No; that is, my mirror tells me so."

"Very well; we wont quarrel with your mirror—not to-day; though I might speak of your eyes and mouth. Still, if a face is not actually deformed, features count for very little."

"You, an artist, say that?"

"Yes, certainly, and I love form as well as any one. Come, let us have some lunch."

Mrs. Bradford led the way back into the house. They sat down in the dining-room before a lunch which Salome afterward described to her husband as precisely the lunch that was appropriate to be served in Mrs. Bradford's house. This was rather an indefinite description, but it seemed to be all that Salome was able to give. The two were alone. Once when Salome, hearing footsteps in the hall, glanced expectantly at the door, her hostess said:

"Mr. Bradford is out of town, or you would meet him. To-night I shall present him to my sketch of you. I shall have an unprejudiced criticism, in one sense. For he has never seen you. I am looking forward to his thinking it is an ideal head."

"I have been wishing I might meet him," said Salome. "And yet I'm afraid. Does he know——"

Here she paused so long that her companion said in a quiet tone that was yet full of significance:

"Yes, he knows."

Salome involuntarily sank back a little more in her chair with a feeling of relief and content, believing now that it might be possible that Mr. Bradford was worthy of Mrs. Bradford. She thought that she recalled hearing Moore say that he had met Bradford, and that Moore had spoken well of him. She was not quite sure of this, however. But a man whom this woman loved—while he could not be as worthy of love in every way as Randolph Moore, he might still be an extremely good sort of man.

When Salome at last walked down the steps of the Bradford house she had promised to come again the next morning, and she had obtained permission to bring her husband "just for a moment."

She went rapidly across the common, her head slightly thrown back, her eyes introverted, not really seeing anything save in a way that served to keep her from coming in contact with people or things. And yet her senses were ready to be alert at the slightest summons.

She moved with a sort of pliant grace that seemed to have something exultant in it. Sometimes men and women who were not too much absorbed in themselves turned to look at her. And these men and women always smiled first, and then sighed.

A large, elderly woman with gray curls each side of her face, dressed with perfect appropriateness, and preceded at the distance of two yards by a small, long-haired terrier, saw Salome coming along the path near the State House. She looked full at the other as they met; she paused as one pauses who is not quite decided whether to pause or not. But when she spoke there was no hesitancy in her speech.

"You'll forgive me, I'm sure," she said, "because old people have whims. I want to shake hands with you. I've just been talking with a man who asserted that there was no real happiness in this world. My dear, you'll shake hands with me, won't you?"

Salome smiled as she held out her hand. She was a little shy, too, and she was not sure that she quite liked it that her very appearance advertised to strangers that she was not—well, that she was not wretched.

"Thank you," said the old lady. "I only wish that the man with whom I have been talking was with me. But it does not matter; he may continue living in his benighted condition. Good-by. I'm glad I met you. I call it good luck."

Each went her way. The elder woman going leisurely on in the precise direction from which Salome had just come. And she rang at the same door through which Salome had just passed. The servant who let her in evidently knew her well, for he immediately informed her that his mistress was "in the stoodio," whereupon the visitor walked directly to that place and knocked at the door, which was opened by Mrs. Bradford, who was enveloped in a long white pinafore, and who had her palette in her hand, and the handles of two small brushes between her lips. These last she immediately removed as she greeted her visitor.

"If you had been any one else I wouldn't have let you in," she said cordially.

"Then this is one of the times when I'm glad I'm myself," was the response. "But I don't come nearly as often as I want to. You know I have to walk every day; it's dreadful to grow fat as you grow old. Let me take a bit of this drapery for my terrier to lie on. My terrier is fat, too. There, now we are both settled. Go right on with your work. I like to see you paint. But I always have a teasing desire to paint you when you are painting. I met a girl on the Common just now. I wish I had caught her and brought her to you. You could have made her portrait and called it 'Happiness.' What a lovely thing it is that once in a while a woman may be happy! Are you at work on anything very important?"

"Of course. I always work on important things."

"I know. And everybody says that your 'Still Pool in Spring' is extremely important. But, somehow, I don't care so much for that still pool as the critics seem to care. I like the white birches about it."

The two seemed so much at home with each other that there was entire silence for a space. At last the visitor having ceased to be short breathed from her walk, rose and came round in front of the canvas.

"Ah!" she exclaimed. Mrs. Bradford looked at her in surprised expectancy.

"Well, Mrs. Sears, what is it?"

"Why, it's my happy girl! So you've found her, too! I'm glad of it. You can paint her, if any one can, and then when the thing is exhibited people will walk up to it and wonder why you chose such a subject, and they will say you chose from a fool's paradise. But who would not choose to be a fool like this?"

Mrs. Sears stood long before the sketch. Her face grew very serious. Finally she walked back to the lounging chair and sat down without speaking.

Out of doors, in the clear sunshine that had some warmth in it, Salome was hurrying along to the hotel which for the time was her home. When she reached it she did not care to take the elevator. She still wished to be moving. She felt the exhilarating possession of abounding life.

She hastened along a corridor on the second flight. With her key in her hand she stopped before a certain door. But this door was immediately opened from within. A tall fellow, with a closely cut yellow beard, and a general expression which was not an expression of misery, gently took Salome's arm and drew her into the first of the two apartments that were splendid with the upholstery and the white and gold of a gorgeous hotel.

"I knew it was your step," said Moore, leading his companion forward a little, apparently that he might look at her better.

"Now, don't tell me that," she said, "you couldn't hear my step over such carpets as this magnificent house has on its floors."

"Well, I knew it was time to hear your step," answered the young man, "for I saw you cross the street about three minutes ago, and I calculated. You walk up the stairs; you appear here; I open the door, for I have been waiting for you half an hour. I have no lunch; I am starving. I declined lunching with a friend so that I might get back to you the sooner, and I find vacancy, desolation."

While he talked Salome was looking at him as she took off her gloves and pulled the pins from her bonnet. Though he was smiling and talked easily, though his face showed his joy at seeing her, a faint film of cloud came over her spirits. She could not guess what it was. She was sure it was something.

She had been eager to tell her husband of the incident of the morning. But now she asked instead:

"Randolph, has anything, the least little thing in the world, happened?"

(To be continued.)

ANONYMOUS GIFTS AND BEGGING LETTERS.

From The Gentlewoman.

Royal people are, of course, besieged with letters from all parts of their dominions. Politicians, too, have rather a hard time of it, more particularly with demands for their autographs. I remember a secretary of Lord Salisbury's once told me that his popular chief received no less than forty requests a day for his signature. But the people who suffer most from the anonymous letter-writer are the men and women of the stage. Poor Mr. Irving! Poor Miss Terry! One's heart bleeds for them as one thinks of the endless and most beseeching notes which reach them begging for a lock of hair, a signed photograph, a smile directed to a certain box of enthusiasts, an order for a wholly anti-macassar, the sum of five shillings for the benefit of a cottage home, a timely word of advice as to whether a woman may succeed who adopts the stage in her fortieth year, etc. Patti has been so pestered by the begging letter-writer that she no longer opens the envelopes directed to her unless the handwriting be a friendly, familiar one; the work is relegated to her maid.

Anonymous gifts are less frequent, of course, than letters, but they arrive in due course. The Princess of Wales once had a tiny white dog sent to her by the Parcels post in a wicker box. Fond as the Princess is of all her pets, "Fussy," for so he was named, remains her prime favorite, and very often does she wonder who the thoughtful donor could possibly have been. One of Albani's finest parures of diamonds and turquoises came from a lady to whom she had never spoken. During the whole year of the run of "The Dancing Girl," Mr. Tree was supplied nightly with a button-hole, and during "Captain Swift" with more than he knew what to do with, and both he and his wife have been recipients for some time past of beautiful gifts of china and other pretty things sent anonymously to the theatre. Nor was the famous Bully Boy forgotten, since boxes of macaroons and other dainties were frequently sent to him by ladies who appreciated the pathetic glance of his rolling eye and the stolid wag of his tail.

Capoul, the French tenor, was the recipient of volumes of letters from lady admirers, both here and in Paris. On the English stage, besides Mr. Irving, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Hare, and Mr. Bancroft, have been overwhelmed with a goodly number. But I am told by one who knows, that no actor living ever received such a number of admiring epistles from the fairer sex as the late John Clayton. Among actresses Mrs. Bancroft has, perhaps, been treated to the kindliest attentions. Mrs. John Wood, too, on the first or last night of her play had always her dressing-room converted into a perfect bower of flowers, and little gifts of jewelry literally poured in upon her. There was one bangle with the inscription "Bless your art." Whether it was Mrs. Wooda's heart or art that was blessed, remains a riddle to this day.

FOSS'S FUN AND FANCY.

THE DEACON'S BEAR-YARN AND ALL ABOUT THE BAD MAN AND THE WORSE PHRENOLOGIST.

THE DEACON'S BEAR-YARN.

When the Deacon told his bear-yarn we would
gather round to hear him,
In open-mouthed expectancy to drink in all he said;
For all list'ners who drew near him could not
choose but to revere him,
For an aureole of honor rested on the Deacon's
head.
'Twas a tale of gore and slaughter, where the red
blood flowed like water,
Such as ear had never heard of, or the heart could
not conceive.
But our faith did never weaken in that bear-yarn
of the Deacon—
When the Deacon told his bear-yarn we would listen and believe.

We had listened to the horse-liar and the fish-liar
and the snake-liar,
But they told no tale of wonder with the Deacon's
to compare;
Though their tales were dark and dire, not a tale
of not a liar
Approached the truthful story of the Deacon and
the bear.
'Twas a tale of awful terror, but without a shade of
error,
And, whereas it was impossible the Deacon could
deceive.
We knew the Deacon's bear-yarn was an honest,
fair and square yarn—
When the Deacon told his bear-yarn we would listen and believe.

When the Deacon told his bear-yarn we could hear
the bones a-breaking,
And the loud reverberations of the bear's resounding growl.
We could feel the mountains shaking and the very
planet quaking,
And the air a-palpitating with the thunder of his
howl.
Oh, the sanguinary, savage fierceness of the awful
ravage
Of the roaring, ravening monster heart of man cannot conceive.
But, whereas we knew the Deacon from the truth
could never weaken;
When the Deacon told his bear-yarn we would listen and believe.

When the fierce bear wound his red jaws round the
white neck of the Deacon,
And we heard the Deacon gurgle with a death-gasp of despair,
How our trembling knees would weaken as we
gazed upon the deacon,
And our lifted hats go flying from our perpendicular hair!
When into the mad bear's vitals—strangest of all
strange recitals—
Did the Deacon plunge his right arm with its reeking bloody sleeve,
And tear out the bear's heart beating, as you'd
tear a piece of sheeting—
When the Deacon told this bear-yarn we would listen and believe.

Fiercer, wilder grew the contest every time we did
behold it.
Wilder, fiercer fought the Deacon, fiercer, wilder
raged the bear;
It was bloodier, more terrific every time the Deacon
told it.
Till at length there was no story with this bear-
yarn could compare.
Bear and Deacon mixed and mangled, gore incrusted, blood-bespangled,
Dance through sanguinary waltzes that the mind
cannot conceive;
But there is a deathless beauty to all truth, and 'tis
our duty
When the Deacon tells his bear-yarn just to listen
and believe.

THE BAD MAN AND THE PHRENOLOGIST.

The venerable phrenologist was puzzled. He had examined the heads of three generations, and had never yet found a man or woman without some redeeming qualities of mind. He had always found some good "bumps" on every head.

Upon these good bumps it was his habit to amplify, and his subjects usually left him feeling that they were paragons of virtue and models of intellect.

But now he had a subject before him whose cranial development gave no indications of any kind of virtue whatever. He felt that there was no limit to the harm such a man might do. The phrenologist's own incrusted conscience was touched. He resolved that he would not feed this man on pleasant flatteries, as he had all his previous subjects. He would tell him the bald, disagreeable truth, let the consequences be what they might.

"Sir," said the phrenologist, "in the first place you are a very plain man."

"Well, I had that impression," answered the subject, "myself. But I am glad to have this impression emphasized by such a scientific opinion as your own. I am a very plain and homely man. This is delightful. So was Socrates. His Athenian neighbors said he looked like a satyr, which means that he was as homely as a goat. So was Charles the Fifth. That mouth of his, the Encyclopaedia Britannica intimates, was a perfect deformity. St. Paul, you know, says his personal presence was mean, and Abraham Lincoln was never mistaken for a beauty. George Eliot, you know, would never have her picture taken. I am glad to know I am in such good company. Go on!"

"Your temper, I am sorry to say," continued the phrenologist, "is a very fiery and unmanageable one."

"Good enough! good enough!" said the subject, "I thought so myself, but I am glad to hear you say so. You remember what a temper old Coriolanus had. You remember how James Parton said Andrew Jackson was sometimes like a caged tiger. You remember how Washington used to get mad, and how he swore at Trenton. You remember how Thomas Carlyle used to snarl and tear, and how old Samuel Johnson used to get red in the face and break the dishes, and how Martin Luther used to froth around. Oh, I am glad you told me this. It ranks me at once with some of the most illustrious men of the world. Go on! go on! let's hear some more."

"My friend, it pains me inexpressibly to say it," continued the phrenologist, "but you are a thief."

"Good! good! this is better than I expected. Why, just look at Lord Bacon, one of the greatest men the world ever produced, and just think of his embezzlements. Then look at Shakespeare, the very greatest man the world ever knew. He stole deer, I never expected to be ranked with Bacon and Shakespeare. Professor, here is another dollar. Go on! go on!"

"You are an awful liar."

"Hurrah! this is turning out much better than I expected. So was Napoleon Bonaparte, so was Edgar A. Poe and Cardinal Richelieu and Cardinal Wolsey and Machiavelli and——"

"You are apt to be glum, moody and unsociable."

"Good! so was Grant, Hawthorne, William the Silent, Dante and——"

"You are vain and conceited."

"Glorious! glorious! You remember Julius Cæsar was so vain that he used to wear a wreath to cover up his baldness. Alexander the Great and most of the Roman emperors were so conceited that they had themselves worshipped as gods. Why, John Milton had as an exalted opinion of himself, almost, as I have of myself."

"But you are lazy."

"So was Coleridge and the poet Thompson."

"You are treacherous."

"So was Hannibal."

"You are selfish."

"So was Napoleon."

"You drink."

"So did Byron, Burns, Alexander and——"

"You are deformed."

"So was Esop and King Richard and Alexander Pope and——"

"You are improvident."

"So was Daniel Webster and Richard Brinsley Sheridan and——"

"You are visionary."

"So was Columbus and Savonarola and——"

"Why, man, you're crazy!"

"So was Cowper and George the Third and Jonathan Swift and——"

"Finally," broke in the disgusted phrenologist, "you have all the sins in the catalogue."

"I am glad that I have met you," said the subject, as he put on his hat to depart. "You have encouraged me more than I can tell. You have compared me with Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton, Bonaparte, Socrates, Cæsar, Washington, Lincoln, Hawthorne, and most of the other great men, ancient and modern, foreign and native. I have discovered that I possess all the elements of greatness. I have all the characteristics of the greatest poets, the greatest philosophers, the greatest statesmen and the greatest leaders of men of all time. I have long suspected all this myself; but it encourages me more than I express to have it substantiated by such an eminent authority as yourself. I shall now endeavor to develop to the utmost all the qualities which you say I possess. I shall make the most of them, and whatever I may become I shall always feel that I owe it all very largely to you."

The subject then took his departure with a glad, triumphant look upon his face, and the phrenologist sat down and thought and thought and thought.

SAM WALTER FOSS.

MR. GLADSTONE'S OUTING.

A CHARMING RETREAT IN PERTHSHIRE

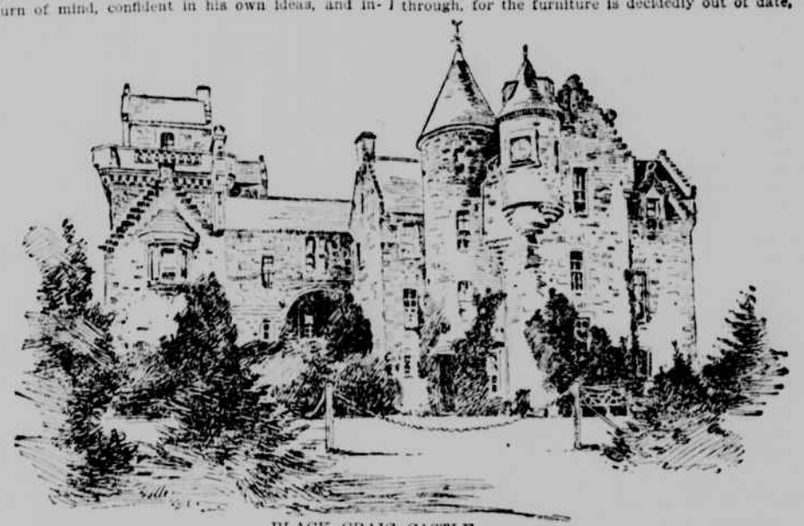
Last year, while travelling in what he so fondly calls "dear old Scotland," Mr. Gladstone stopped for a few minutes at an insignificant little village in Perthshire, called Kirkmichael, and gave a short but important speech, which astonished some politicians. He incidentally referred to the "beautiful country" through which he was passing, and from the fact that last month, for his summer vacation, he took up his residence with Mr. George Armitstead at Blackcraig Castle, within four miles of the same spot, it would almost appear as if he had meant more than the usual empty compliment.

Blackcraig Castle, which Mr. Armitstead has taken for the season—chiefly, it was understood from the beginning, on Mr. Gladstone's account—is, says "The Pall Mall Gazette," a modern building in the old castellated style, situated in a "strath," or glen, called Strathardle, Perthshire, about twenty-nine miles from Perth and thirteen from Blairgowrie. It was built by the late Mr. Patrick Allan-Fraser, who was his own architect and master of works as well; and so assiduous was he in his attentions while the work was going on that it might truly be said that there was scarcely a stone in the whole building he had not traced from the quarry to its own special place in the structure. He was a man of a strong, original turn of mind, confident in his own ideas, and insisting wherever he could upon their being carried out. So particular was he that many parts of the buildings were taken down and rebuilt before the workmen were allowed to have peace. The date of foundation is 1848, one year after the estate was acquired by purchase, but it looks much older. The reason is that when in process of construction Mr. Allan-Fraser gave strict orders to the workers to preserve as much as possible all rough and weather-beaten surfaces, the more lichen-covered the better, and these were invariably turned to the outside. It was a quaint idea, and very well carried out, the result being that, with the ivy, which appears to have taken kindly to the walls, one would think the castle dated from the middle of the eighteenth, not the nineteenth, century. But such is the base, and a similar remark applies to the wood about the place, which is so luxuriant and sturdy. There was nothing but muir gorse and heather in 1847; every tree has been planted, and many hundreds more that never reached maturity. In 1885 several additions were made to the castle.

A curious adjunct to the place is the "Bridge House," as it is called. This consists of a massive granite bridge across the River Ardle; an arch, high enough to admit carriages, spans the bridge transversely, and upon this is a castellated house, with a parapet running along the outside. The whole has a very striking appearance, and to gaze from one of the house windows down upon the river beneath, which it overhangs five or six feet, gives one anything but a comfortable sensation. This structure was begun in 1881 and was four years building, with a strong staff of masons working constantly. Some of the stones employed in the construction are as long as twelve feet and six feet wide. The granite is a particularly hard kind, and there are lively traditions still as to the number of "jumpers" destroyed in working the stone.

Inside the building the rooms are, for the most part, very small, much of the space which might otherwise have been available for accommodation of some sort being taken up with the spiral staircases and lobbies which seem to monopolize too much. The principal room in the building is the drawing-room, which is both handsome and spacious, high in the roof, and well lighted. The half-arches of pine, which support the roof, are an elegant feature of the room. The dining-room is on the basement, and is lower in the roof, and consequently somewhat dingy. The late proprietor seems to have had a taste for the antique all through, for the furniture is decidedly out of date,

BLACK CRAIG BRIDGE.



BLACK CRAIG CASTLE.

and, while strong enough, does not look comfortable. This applies more particularly to the low-seated, high, straight-backed chairs in the dining-room. There are a number of old carved cabinets about, evidently of foreign make, which did not fail to interest and delight the G. O. M.

The garden is somewhat disappointing for such an imposing structure, being a very unpretentious affair, with plenty of mignionette and shamrock in it. A sundial on the lawn is a bit of a curiosity, as it indicates the difference between the time at Greenwich and Blackcraig. It was made by the late Mr. A. Bro[illegible]n, LL. D., Arbroath. There is also a clock in one of the towers.

Although not a stone's-throw from the public road, the house is quite secluded, and numerous walks about the ground add to the amenities of the place. There is good fishing in the Ardle, and sport of various kinds on "Craighdhu," behind. Altogether, the choice of situation was a particularly happy one for the object in view; and as there is a postoffice, with telegraph, about a mile from the lodge gate, communication with the uttermost ends of the earth was only a matter of a few minutes.

A PERIPATETIC HYPNOTIZER.

From The London Daily Telegraph.

Good-looking young women who travel on the tops of Paris omnibuses are threatened with a serious danger. There is a man with fascinating eyes going about who is called the "peripatetic hypnotizer," and every woman who falls a victim to his glare becomes as unconscious as any of the subjects in the Salpetriere Hospital. The latest victim of the mesmerist, or hypnotizer, is a young dressmaker, who was travelling on a 'bus from the Wine Market to the Place Pigalle. When the vehicle stopped at the last mentioned place everybody had to get down. The dressmaker did not do so, and the conductor was surprised to find her not only fast asleep, but absolutely proof against his most energetic attempts to wake her up. After innumerable and unavailing pushes, shakes and pinches, the conductor, aided by his driver, carried the somnolent seamstress to a chemist's shop, where she was recalled to consciousness. Her trance lasted nearly two hours. On awakening she said that a young man who was near her on the top of the 'bus had fixed his eyes firmly on her and she fell asleep almost immediately.